

CEMS MIM 2013 Masters Work Project  
Launch Of New Yves Saint Laurent Baby Doll Mascara in  
Italy

*Baby Doll not just a mascara, but an attitude*

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## 1. BRIEF CONTEXT

### A. CLIENT

L’Oreal’s promise is to offer everyone, all over the world, the best of cosmetics in terms of quality, efficacy and safety and to give everyone access to beauty by offering products in harmony with their needs. L’Oréal is divided into 4 main divisions: Professional Products, Consumer Products, Luxury Products and Active Cosmetics plus “The Body Shop” and “Galderma.” To date, the company’s portfolio consists of 23 international brands present within a variety of different distribution channels in more than 130 countries. Included in its portfolio is Yves Saint Laurent Beauty, which L’Oreal acquired in 2008. YSL has a strong brand heritage and particularly complements the existing mix of the L’Oreal luxe division.

YSL is a mythical French luxury brand and it is admired all over the world over for its audacity, modernity and unrestrained Parisian elegance. The beauty division is consistent with this brand image, securing itself as a major player in the worldwide premium cosmetics market. Currently, YSL offers fragrances, skincare and makeup and some of its most successful products, which have become iconic for the brand, include Opium in the fragrance category and “Touche D’éclat” in the makeup category.

### B. MARKET OVERVIEW

The beauty business is driven by sexual undertones and will likely continue to be extremely profitable for many years to come. The industry’s structure is fragmented and hyper-segmented and represents a 250 billion dollar retail value. Comprised of skincare, hair care, cosmetics, toiletries and perfumes, the industry is characterized by stable growth, shortening product lifecycles and a consolidation of key players. Moreover, these multinational, multibusiness and multibranded companies are for the most part global brands with local strategies that are deeply integrated with R&D and production.

Emerging business trends include:

- › Constant innovation and stressing scientific credentials<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The industry is marketing a new category of products that blurs the line between cosmetics and non-prescription

- › Favouring multipurpose and multifunctional products
- › Internal health and wellness beauty and natural cosmetics.
- › Cross-market development; new segments have begun to emerge such as men and teens.

The beauty industry is ultimately a mass-market industry but is gradually becoming more unique. Consumers increasingly desire local brands with tailored services, which in turn, influences companies need to adapt a niche market effort to their strategy.

Overall, all sectors in the worldwide luxury industry are forecasted to grow in 2013, reinforcing the organic growth seen in 2012. More specifically, according to the Altgamma consensus 2013, the fragrances and cosmetics category is expected to achieve a growth rate of 4% this year. Competitive rivalry is high and concentrated in the beauty and fragrances industry among key players, with L’Oreal holding a firm position. Please refer to **Exhibit 1** for a list of the key players in the global beauty market.

In the Italian market, according to Bain Consulting group, there are strong signals of a slowdown in the local luxury consumption in retail. Tourism expenditure, however, continues to remain a key influence on the industry’s performance, with the Chinese and Asian flows maintaining their momentum, especially in the main touristic cities in Italy. The distribution channels for fragrances and beauty products are fragmented in Italy with the Limoni retailer holding the highest position in terms of market share (See **Exhibit 2**).

### C. CURRENT CLIENT SITUATION

YSL beauty is a successful makeup brand, which embodies French heritage and style. In 2011, the company outperformed the market by 11 points, with the makeup division up +9.9%. Although it has a strong brand image and identity, the beauty segment of YSL has a growing “old fashion” reputation in the luxury beauty market.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the company is at a crossroads and needs to reinvent themselves by making a transition from dated to fashion forward and modern.

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<sup>2</sup> Information obtained from Can Tanner- the product manager for YSL Beauty Italy.

Competitors such as Chanel and Dior are targeting a younger demographic with their new product launches, which is fuelling their growth in the more mature markets such as Italy (refer to **Exhibit 3** for the top performers). Moving forward, in order for YSL to remain competitive in the beauty segment, a brand rejuvenation strategy is essential.

In an attempt to rejuvenate the brand, the YSL team has created a new product line called Baby Doll. The line is comprised of 11 products including mascaras, eyeliners, lip colour and nail polish, with campaign being focused on one product—Baby Doll mascara.



The new Baby Doll mascara is volume effect “faux cils,” and provides structured volume with a defined look. The product promise is Youth, Style and Audacity.

**Brush:** The mascara’s technologically advanced brush is made of elastomer. With two kinds of bristles: thicker and more separated bristles to body perfectly each lash and a multitude of thin bristles to multiply and structure the fringe.

**Formula:** Creates long lasting volume, and intense colour due to pigment micro-dispersion. It has new texturizing agents to sheath the lashes in a single stroke. This formula is also characterized by a three-polymer combination that acts as a fitting coat to protect the lashes from the external environment.

**Result:** It reveals a magnified eye look that captures the light. Lashes are magnified.

As stated above, the Baby Doll line is aimed at recruiting younger consumers (age 20-35) and as a result, the entire marketing campaign reflects this. First, **the product**, the choice of font and the dark pink text colour is appealing for a younger audience. Second, in terms of **promotion**, the face of the new Baby doll product line is fashion’s new superstar and the face of 2012 Cara Delevigne. She represents a new ultra modern femininity and her style readily plays with the established codes of YSL. The model has an innocent youthfulness sensuality that is irresistibly audacious and utterly edgy (See **Exhibit 4**). Third, with regards to **the place**, the Baby Doll mascara will be sold in the channels where YSL beauty products are currently being sold, more specifically, perfumeries, department stores and Sephora in Italy. Finally the price is around 30 Euros, which is at the higher end of the mascara market reflecting the YSL premium brand appeal.

## D. BUSINESS PROJECT CHALLENGE

As the project managers of YSL beauty, our business challenge was to launch the new Baby Doll mascara in the Italian market keeping two main objectives in mind.

- › To be the top mascara in Italy post launch (sell 6 YSL baby doll products at each POS<sup>3</sup>).
- › To recruit a younger consumer segment to purchase YSL beauty products ages 20-35. To create a new feminine territory that reasserts the YSL DNA.

Since the potential to serve the younger consumer segment has become increasingly attractive, YSL challenged our team to construct an innovative promotional strategy aimed for the new mascara with duration of 6-12 months with a financial launch budget of 500,000 €. Our launch strategy was to be daring and was to take into consideration the media strategy; the digital channels, the retail experience, and finally creative launch material. More specifically, we needed to consider a number of creative ways to generate buzz and expectation in-store and in the market. Moreover, we were tasked with structuring a promotional strategy that involved the 1750 perfumeries in Milan. Additionally, we were asked to come up with in-store events that occur at the top point of sales in at least ten cities and finally, to define a strategy for shop assistants since they play a vital role in the purchasing decision of beauty products. Ultimately, this challenge would allow us to use our creative side and be innovative and provocative. To stay consistent with the YSL brand identity, while thinking beyond boundaries and breaking the rules.

## E. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Focusing on the goal of the challenge, we were able to confirm<sup>4</sup> that YSL had low brand awareness but a solid brand image in Italy. The associations to the brand were strong, favorable and unique; however, the younger segments were not attracted by the YSL makeup brand.

Therefore, the main proposal to tackle this aspect consisted of developing a promotional strategy with a concept directed at a younger consumer segment and that was in line with the given communication strategy. The message, tone of voice, atmosphere and the model used define the unique new image of

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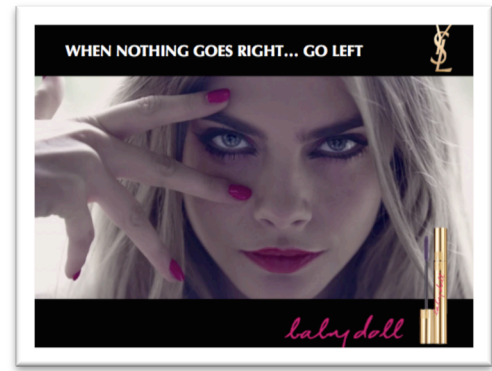
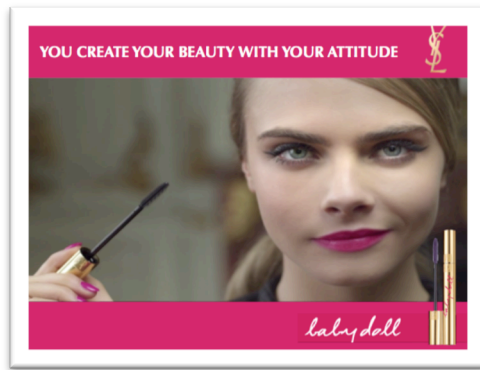
<sup>3</sup> POS- Point of sale.

<sup>4</sup> Opinions from the product manager of YSL, the focus groups interviews and the Sephora employees.



the baby doll line within the YSL product portfolio. Thus, our entire promotional campaign was inspired by the baby doll video<sup>5</sup> and centered around the theme:

*What is your baby doll attitude? The Good Baby Doll or the Bad Baby Doll?*



We wanted to create a long-term relationship with the younger consumers in order to increase brand recognition. We proposed 4 initiatives for the promotional campaign

- › Live events- The black box, Rinascente party
- › Launch materials- Good and bad baby doll kits, travel kits, MacBook metamorphosis
- › Guerilla marketing – Branded claw machines
- › Retail experience – The Baby Doll bar and column, the Baby Doll program, Christmas rollout

Finally, the last suggestion made was the full integration of online and offline channels. Pertaining to the current market and trends in digital marketing - a crucial aspect in the marketing mix - we made sure to create a promotional campaign capable of being fully integrated in all channels. Please refer to the product launch implementation document for detailed description of each initiative.

<sup>5</sup> The online viral video shows scenes that focus on Cara's daily life with scenes of her applying the baby doll mascara. Moreover, a catchy song named Baby Doll, played by the Parisian band La Femme, is playing softly in the background. As the video progresses the "party side" of Cara is revealed and the music becomes louder. The images change to her at night, with her friends etc. Overall, setting the tone of day/night and good/ bad.

## 2. REFLECTION ON THE WORK DONE

### A. WHAT WAS THE ORIGINAL APPROACH?

Our team conducted an in-depth analysis in order to achieve the business project goals. First, we conducted a brand inventory of YSL beauty products in order to provide a current and comprehensive profile of how the products and/or services sold by the brand are marketed.

More specifically we looked at what YSL is currently doing in terms of:

- › Products / Products lines and Brand Extensions
- › Distribution channels
- › Names, logos, symbols, slogans
- › Packaging and Pricing
- › Advertising, promotions
- › Online activities

Second, we performed a competitor analysis focusing on the strongest players in the market: Chanel, Dior and Lancôme. We concentrated on their online and offline strategies and then ranked them in terms of their digital marketing efforts and impact (see **Exhibit 5**). Given the industry trends, we consider the digital marketing channel to be of growing importance and a key success factor for brands today. From the competitor analysis we derived key factors to which we applied to our strategic recommendations.

Finally, on a broader level, we conducted a benchmark analysis in which we tried to find the most successful promotional campaigns worldwide. Following our selection of 10 campaigns, we grouped each campaign according to 4 metrics: customer experience, digital experience, “outside the box” thinking and brand rejuvenation. From there we selected the best campaign<sup>6</sup> from each category and applied their key strengths to our recommendations.

### B. HOW DID IT EVOLVE OVER TIME? WHY?

After completing the comprehensive examination of YSL in terms of its sources of brand equity from the perspective of the company (brand inventory), we realized that we lacked the viewpoint of the

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<sup>6</sup> Our selection was influenced by the campaigns we felt had the most relevant takeaways for the YSL Baby doll new product launch.



consumer (brand exploratory). In order to understand the consumers' perceptions and beliefs and to uncover the true meaning of the YSL brand, we then decided to enhance our approach and conduct qualitative research. Thus, we conducted a focus group in which we interviewed six women in the target age group.

Finally, another aspect that evolved in our approach was our point of sales exploration technique. At first we focused on Italy, by questioning shop assistants on some of the reasons for recommending a brand to consumers. Our approach generated little results and the store employees we approached in Milan were very hesitant to answer us. Also, most of them did not speak English and thus it was hard to understand their motivations. With little success, we decided to go beyond the geographic scope of Italy and investigate the best practices for shop assistants in our home country. I was able to contact representatives at Sephora Canada and acquire some information concerning shop assistant initiatives in North America. These informal interviews proved to be very insightful for our final recommendation at the point of sales channel.

### **C. WHAT ARE THE MAIN LIMITATIONS OF THE APPROACH USED?**

Although our quantitative research was a relevant metric to explore brand perceptions in our business project, a limitation was that we did not have the quantitative data to support our recommendations. Given the limited time and resources, our professor advised us to rely on the competitor and benchmark analysis as well as the focus group. Indeed this quantitative research, in the form of surveys, could have been insightful for the product manager of YSL, particularly since the brand was aiming to target a new unfamiliar segment in the Italian market. The surveys would provide insightful information about the Italian consumers between the ages of 20-35 and could be used for future launches aimed at the same target group and would allow for more accurate recommendations with an increased fit with brand.

Midway through our project we were updated on the financial side of our work and this presented another limitation. In fact, our budget was cut to 300K, with 200K being reserved strictly for media initiatives, mostly print ads. This sudden development limited our recommendations and thus we had to eliminate numerous launch initiatives from our original proposal.

## D. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE DIFFERENTLY?

### i. *New development Idea- The Baby Doll Summer Tour Bus*

Keeping in mind the original objectives of our business project, followed by our extensive analysis and research our final proposal consisted 5 initiatives for the launch of the YSL Baby Doll mascara. Live events, Launch materials, Guerilla marketing, Retail experience, and digital media. During our brainstorming phase, we discussed several other interesting promotional initiatives. However, when making our final recommendations we had to choose the most suitable ones. Our selection of initiatives was based on the following questions.

- › Does the initiative target a younger demographic?
- › Is it in line with the YSL brand heritage and identity?
- › Does it fit with the local strategy of YSL beauty in Italy?
- › Is it in line with our new budget of 300 K?
- › Is it feasible to implement in such a short time frame?

During our business project briefing the product manager made it very clear that if he liked our ideas, they would be implemented in Italy. Therefore although some ideas were very good, we only chose the initiatives that were achievable in a one-month period<sup>7</sup> and consequently our recommendations were limited. **For the purpose of this work project I would like to explore and develop a new launch initiative that was overlooked by our team but that I believe can add value to the YSL Baby Doll Mascara product launch.** The launch initiative will be named **The Baby Doll Summer Tour Bus**. It will be a branded YSL bus scheduled to tour during launch campaign period. The idea is to have an interactive make-up station inside the bus, which will tour around relevant cities in Italy.

### ii. *The Proposal* a. *The Design*

The Baby Doll Bus initiative will remain in line with the concept developed in our Business project launch proposal. What is your baby Doll Attitude? The Good or the Bad Baby Doll? The exterior of the bus will be black and pink to remain consistent with our proposed campaign

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<sup>7</sup> Baby doll Mascara launch was scheduled for June 2013 and we presented our BP May31st 2013.

colors. In addition, the two posters images will be shown, one on each side of the bus.

The interior of the Baby Doll Bus will also reflect the good and the bad attitude theme. It will include several baby doll makeup bars (See **Exhibit 6**). These Baby Doll Bars will be similar to the ones proposed in our point of sale recommendation. The Bar will be divided in two parts; one side dedicated to the Bad Baby Doll look and the other side to the Good Baby Doll look. Successful product launch campaigns are those that remain consistent across all channels, hence my reasoning for the design and stylistic codes intended for the Baby Doll Bus.

#### b. The Place

Keeping the original objective in mind, the baby doll tour will be concentrated in Italy. It will be scheduled to begin during the product launch period and last the summer months of July and August. The basis for my recommendation of cities for the baby doll bus tour is twofold.

First, I analyzed the consumption trends in the country and chose to focus the tour in the regions with the highest consumption of beauty products. Please refer to **Exhibit 7** for the breakdown of beauty product consumption per region in Italy. Second, I conducted informal interviews with 2 masters' students at Bocconi University and with my academic advisor concerning the tour. Considering I am not Italian and have no expertise regarding Italian cities the objective of these interviews was to determine which cities would be the most suitable for the baby doll summer tour. Built on geographic diversification around Italy, favorable population demographics and cultural considerations I propose the following cities for the tour

Lombardia Region (Milano)- The highest consumption of beauty products in this region. Milan is a fashion capital with a high population; all the relevant trends are generated in this city and then widespread in the rest of the country. Many top universities are in Milan, which is relevant to the Baby Doll target group.

Piemonte Region (Torino) - Torino is the "capital" of Piemonte, which is one of the regions with the highest consumption of beauty products. Moreover this city is undergoing a trend of rejuvenation<sup>8</sup>, many important events are taking place there, especially related to cinema and art. Therefore I assume that the population might be interested and proactive in taking part in the bus tour idea.

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<sup>8</sup> Popular destination among the younger generations in Italy.

Veneto Region (Verona)- Verona is the city of "Romeo and Juliet", characterized by high tourism affluence, it represents the perfect location to attract curious tourists and many students who attend "Università degli studi di Verona".

Emilia Romagna Region (Bologna)- Bologna is located in the center of Italy and represents the perfect union between the northern and southern regions. It is the city where the first university was founded and still is nowadays the most important "university city". Many students from all over Italy and all possible faculties (from engineering to performing arts) study in Bologna. This would fit perfectly with the brand rejuvenation approach.

Campania Region (Napoli)- Located in the south of Italy, it is for sure the most important southern city. It attracts many tourists from around the country.

Lazio Region (Rome)- Rome is the capital of Italy and Lazio. It goes without saying that it is essential to schedule this city as a bus tour location because of the many people living there, the massive tourism and more in general the word of mouth, which can be generated.

Veneto (Jesolo) - Jesolo is a popular seaside location; it hosts many music festivals during the summer and is the perfect location for the Italians to take short weekend vacations on the seaside. Moreover it is part of Veneto, which is a high beauty product consumption region.

Tuscany Region (Forte Dei Marmi)- Forte Dei Marmi is a seaside location in Tuscany, it is part of central Italy and is highly frequented during the summer, by Italians especially from "Milanesi", who own a second house in this city.

Puglia Region (Gallipoli)- Gallipoli is part of the Salento in Puglia, which has experienced a huge bust in the last years. It has become a popular vacation location, especially among young adults, who are attracted by the breathtaking views and amusing and entertaining nightlife. Gallipoli is a fun and popular city and perfect to share the YSL Baby Doll attitude.

Sardegna (Porto Cervo)- Porto Cervo is located in the North of Sardegna, the famous Italian island is THE summer destination, for old and younger people. It is more expensive than the other cities and therefore is considered more exclusive fitting the YSL luxury appeal.

### c. Social Media Integration

A key learning from this business project is that online and offline events should be fully integrated with social media. Sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and LinkedIn—represent a major change in how consumers acquire information and interact with their environments. Companies require a customer-strategy enterprise to plan deliberate strategies for dealing with social media, in an effort to build and strengthen its customer relationships. Potential Baby Doll customers will have the opportunity to follow the summer tour around the different cities in Italy online because this campaign will be fully intergraded. Also customers who got their makeup done can comment on their experience on Twitter (e.g. #YSLBabydollsummertour) and YSL ambassadors can post pictures of makeovers on Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram. The Baby Dolls who participate in the bus initiative can obviously share their experiences using the same channels, maybe also adding their own pictures and comments. Moreover, it will be possible to find out about the next location of the bus with the help of the new application we already recommended to the YSL team. For those who can't reach the selected POSs the attitude quiz will also be available on the App. Finally, it will also be possible to share the results of the quiz on the main social media. The YSL experience webpage will promote the tour by sharing the dates and information about what is happening in each city.

### d. Measuring Impact of the initiative

The increase of the size of the database can be considered as direct and immediate measure of the success of the initiative. Also the general activity on social media channels will help to evaluate whether the Baby Dolls consumers have appreciated the initiative and whether they considered it fun and amusing. Moreover, comments and check-ins on Facebook could be a good indicator (e.g. “Will you be in Verona for the bay doll summer buss tour?”). Ultimately, revenues from the direct sales at the Baby Doll Bus will be another good way to measure the success of this project.

### iii. *Business Objectives Of the Baby doll Summer Tour Bus*

This outdoor campaign aims to **improve consumer awareness** of the new YSL baby doll brand. This initiative will **generate excitement** about the new product line and reinforce the Baby Doll attitude theme around the country.

The Baby Doll summer tour will achieve an **educative interaction dimension** something that is necessary for success in the beauty industry. Since the YSL brand ambassadors will take part in the entire summer tour, interested consumers can enjoy free makeup tutorials to understand how to develop the YSL Baby Doll look on the spot. This interaction will create positive brand image in people's minds and will give them the chance to try the products before purchase.

Furthermore, it is important for customers to build comprehensive customer databases. As customer database marketing grows, companies can partake in- individualized marketing, customer intimacy, dialogue marketing, interactive marketing. When consumers approach the bus the brand ambassadors will ask them to fill in their personal information including their emails and also ask them to take the "Attitude Quiz." This quiz<sup>9</sup> will be available on a tablet embellished with Baby Doll stickers. According to the Quiz results, they will be given a free Good Baby Doll or a Bad Baby Doll poster. This aspect of the initiative will provide yet another opportunity for YSL to gain customer information and **enlarge their database**. Moreover, they can use this information to target the younger age segment for future product launches. Lastly, this will allow YSL to involve their potential consumers; **two-way interaction** and customer engagement is a good way to enhance brand image and awareness.

A recent trend in retailing strategy is the increasing presence of concept and pop up stores. During the summer tour the entire baby doll product line will be available to purchase in the baby doll bus. This new direct distribution channel in the format of a pop up store will thus create an opportunity to **increase revenues** for the YSL beauty brand.

#### *iv. Justification of initiative*

After completing the business project, listening to our academic advisor and brand managers' feedback and also considering the findings from our focus group, I am convinced that this new initiative fit with the YSL Baby Doll product launch and ultimately add brand value.

*Incorporating the Learning's from The Victoria Secret Case: Brand Rejuvenation Success.*

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<sup>9</sup> The attitude quiz was already developed and used in our business project recommendations.



During our benchmark analysis we analyzed the case of Victoria Secrets. In order for them to grow they needed to improve sales among the younger target segment. To solve this challenge Victoria Secret created the Pink Nation addition to their ecommerce site. On this page consumers can purchase the Pink by Victoria Secret products. Furthermore, potential consumers in this age segment can create a membership and participate in exclusive contests and design challenges offered. Another interesting aspect to the campaign was their Pink Nation Tailgate Tour, which was a tour aimed at college campuses across America. During these campus tours, the company offered Pink Nation games, goodies and good times. This initiative capitalized on the high school spirit which very highly relevant in the U.S market. Victoria Secret achieved huge success with this campaign as they were able to rejuvenate the brand and successfully target a younger segment.<sup>10</sup>

This Pink Nation tour is relevant for the YSL Baby Doll brand rejuvenation objectives. As some important aspects for the Baby Doll Summer Tour bus were inspired from this campaign. More specifically, the branded bus concept and the idea of having a summer tour around the country. I am confident that the Baby Doll summer tour can achieve similar success to Victoria Secret in order to rejuvenate the YSL beauty brand in Italy.

#### *Incorporating the Learning's from Our Business Project Feedback.*

The criticism from our business project proposal was, for the most part, positive. One drawback, however stated by the product manager was pertaining to our launch strategy proposal. The main problem with our proposal was that we limited our launch initiatives to the cities of Milan and Rome. Moreover, he explained that it is very risky to organize a launch campaign in Milan and Rome during the summer, since most people leave the big cities to go seaside locations for vacationing.

When developing this new dimension of the project, I made sure to take this feedback into careful consideration. The baby doll summer tour tackles this problem because the recommended cities previously aforementioned are comprised of both big city and seaside

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<sup>10</sup> To date, Pink Nation has a strong social media presence, with 13,004,206 Likes on Facebook, 353,989 Followers on twitter and 60,599 Followers on twitter.

locations. Furthermore, the fact that the initiative last two months and occurs in 10 cities will decrease the risk of potential Baby Doll consumer in Italy missing the launch campaign.

### *Incorporating the Learning's from our Focus Group.*

Our team was able to extract some valuable information for YSL beauty, following our focus group exploratory interviews. First, with regards to purchasing behaviors, it is important for the consumers in this age segment to try the product prior to purchase. Once they are satisfied with the products they tend to remain loyal to the product. Second, with regards purchasing influencers, the participants stressed the importance of the shop assistants opinions and expertise.

The Baby Doll summer bus tour initiative does, in fact, support both of these findings and trends. Potential consumers will have the opportunity to try the mascara prior to purchase should they partake in the initiative. Moreover, the presence of the brand ambassadors at the POS and the fact that they are coaching the potential consumers on how to use products to create the baby doll look will in turn increase consumer confidence about YSL brand.

### *Project Limitations*

Some issues to consider prior to the development of this idea would be the costs and the feasibility of the project. First, given the launch budget of 300K coupled with research concerning the cost implications to develop the branded bus, I realized that this initiative has the potential to use up most of the budget. It is important for brands to diversify their risk and considering that YSL would like to establish more brand awareness in Italy, this might not be the best option to start. A second, limitation could be the availability of talent to undertake the project. As the tour will require brand ambassadors to travel to different cities for a 2-month period, it might be difficult to find people willing to do so and it could be quite costly to compensate them accordingly.

To conclude, after assessing the potential risks and limitations, for the Baby Doll summer tour I am still confident about the potential for success of the initiative. Overall, the idea satisfies the market needs, the consumer trends and lastly the objective for YSL to increase brand awareness among the younger segment in Italy.

### 3. REFLECTION ON LEARNING

#### A. PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE

##### *i. Masters Knowledge Applied*

The creation of an innovative launch strategy for the new YSL baby doll mascara required a foundational understanding in marketing, specifically related to the masters courses of brand management, the management of fashion and luxury companies and customer relationship management.

The most relevant masters content applied to this business projects was from the course of Brand Management with Professor Catherine Da Silveira at NOVA SBE. In fact, our original approach to perform a brand audit (brand inventory + brand exploratory) for YSL and its existing products was taken directly from this course. Our team understood the importance of analyzing the current situation of the brand and to assess the main competitors' strategies. In doing so, we were able to gain valuable insight of the strengths and weaknesses of YSL beauty and consequently apply this to our final recommendations. Another transferable learning concerns marketing research methods and techniques. The exploratory component of our approach which involved the focus group, allowed us to understand consumer perceptions of the brand and most importantly, from these interviews we were able to gain creative ideas for our promotional campaign.

I was able to apply numerous concepts learnt in the Fashion and Luxury course taught by professor Stefania Saviolo, at Bocconi University to the business project. In order to recommend a suitable promotional strategy for YSL, it was important for our team to understand the key success factors in fashion and luxury. Interpreting the national French culture and heritage of YSL, managing the time effectiveness of the launch and managing the glamour aspect of our campaign was all knowledge we acquired from the course and transferred to our proposal. Moreover, the brand Identity model that consists of 3 components (stylistic, retail and communication identity) was a key tool for our team. Our most relevant task in order to achieve our goal was to define the communication identity of YSL since it was the foundation for our product launch. We utilized this understanding by remaining consistent and encompassing the already existing message, tone of voice and atmosphere of the brand to our proposed initiatives.

Lastly, the Customer Relationship Management course with Professor Elizabete Cardoso at NOVA SBE brought key knowledge and insight to our approach and final recommendations. During the course, we were asked to study the benchmarks and to find best CRM practices in other industries, in order to generate ideas for our assignment during the course. This benchmark analysis approach was used in our business project. By examining promotional campaigns outside of the scope (a key learning in this CRM class) of beauty, luxury and fashion, we were able to think outside the box and devise creative recommendations for the Baby Doll mascara launch.<sup>11</sup>

*ii. Masters content adjusted (masters content you had to adjust the most in order to apply; please explain why)*

In order for us to formulate a communication strategy, we had to consider our previous knowledge in this area. There are three different levels of communication. First, product level with the objective to sell. The tools for this include advertising, editorials, fashion shows and events, catalogues, windows display and website. Second, brand level communication with the objective to improve image identity. Tools to achieve this include logo, the website, celebrity marketing, and flagship stores. The last level refers to corporate communication, which we have not considered relevant for our plan. Although we had this prior knowledge with regards to communication, we did however have to adjust our approach for YSL since communication for fashion is completely different than communicating consumer goods.<sup>12</sup> The major difference in the approach being that communication fashion is related to creativity, while communication of consumer goods is related to pure marketing. More specifically we adjusted the communication strategy:

- › **Our target** being trade and opinion leaders instead of the final consumer.
- › **Our tools** being PR and WOM vs. promotions and trade discounts
- › **Our advertising** being print ads versus classic media

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<sup>11</sup> Most notably the branded claw machine- a guerilla marketing initiative that we proposed.

<sup>12</sup> My previous marketing courses were centered on consumer goods and the relevant marketing strategies.

## **B. NEW KNOWLEDGE**

- i. New methodologies and frameworks used (business content and process /project management, etc.)*

We did not use any new methodologies or frameworks related to marketing, given that our task was to plan a promotional launch strategy, which required more creativity and thus, we tried not to get too caught up with frameworks. We did, however, apply some new content related to project management, which was a key tool to manage a recommended initiative from the beginning to the end. The design of the project was crucial and could have had a huge impact on its success or failure. In order to provide a solid realistic plan to the product manager at YSL beauty, we created a detailed implementation plan, which included work packages (for each of our 15 recommended initiatives) and elaborate GANTT chart.<sup>13</sup>

## **C. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE**

- i. Your key strengths & weaknesses - insights from the being in this project*

This business project in collaboration with L'Oreal was one of the most valuable learning experiences during my CEMS MIM degree. The constant interaction with the product manager and professor along with my team, acted as a constant motivation that led us to achieve great results. Personally, I have developed emotional intelligence and am aware of my positive contribution within a team environment.

My key strengths that add value to teams are creativity, market research skills, and interpersonal skills. First, I consider myself to be a creative person. My life experience coupled with my educational knowledge has given me the tools to perform well with projects that require a creative dimension to the projects. In fact, some of the main launch initiatives from our proposal stemmed from my ideas. Over the course of the CEMS MIM program, I have gained confidence in my creative abilities since they have most often been well perceived and even implemented. A second key strength is my ability to conduct thorough market research. My educational training and previous work experience in investment research has given me this skill set. Thus, I was able to conduct an extensive detailed benchmark analysis that was relevant and that had a positive

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<sup>13</sup> The feedback from this new knowledge applied was positive. The product manager for YSL really appreciated our detailed implementation plan.

contribution to the outcome of the business project. Lastly, I am an extroverted person and quite often my interpersonal skills are a great addition to most team environments. During the brainstorming phase of our project, the fact that we were not able to come up with good ideas discouraged our team. By having a positive outlook and being very interested by the business project, I was able to motivate my team during these lull periods. Also, I sought to include all members of the team when designing our recommendations for YSL and thus people felt more comfortable and willing to participate. This action allowed for a positive work environment and for everyone to feel comfortable while expressing their ideas, an important element for the creation of a positive work environment.

During the course of this project, I have identified two weaknesses that need improvement moving forward. First, my frustration with ambiguity and second my lack of expertise in the area of project management. With regards to the latter, being more of a creative person I tend to focus on the idea generation phase vs. the implementation phase. Likewise, as most of our masters' coursework tended to put less focus on the implementation phase, I never fully developed my skills in this area. Since most of our proposed initiatives might in fact be realized by YSL it was important for us to provide them with a rigorous implementation plan and consequently I realize the importance of this. Regarding ambiguity, I noticed that I became frustrated at times during the course of the business project due to lack of clear structure from the product manager. The fact that we were not aware of the exact costs and we were told to just use a "guestimate" was very demotivating for me.

*ii. Plan to develop of your areas of improvements*

I believe that I can improve both of my weaknesses through education. I have already spoken to a team member who has given me numerous resources pertaining to project management. Moreover, during the course of our work I made it a point to constantly ask him questions and to understand his approach. With regards to ambiguity related to costs, I need to learn more about scenario planning. By analyzing the best and worst-case scenarios, I believe I would feel more comfortable when presenting a recommendation plan to a company. Although I have learnt this during my undergrad, I do believe I need to improve with this analytical skill.



#### **D. BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT: WHAT ADDED MOST VALUE? WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DONE DIFFERENTLY?**

Looking back on our assignment I believe that our team composition and dynamic allowed us to add the most value to this project. The fact that we were such a diverse team with different backgrounds and life experiences, led us to achieve the most creative “out of the box” recommendations for YSL. Furthermore, we were very rigorous in our competitor and benchmark analysis and left the YSL team an abundance of information for future use.

From a personal standpoint, I believe this project was greatly beneficial for me and in line with my career aspirations. Upon entry into the CEMS MIM program, I always considered L’Oreal one of my top choices for my future career in marketing. In addition, the fact that we were able to work with a brand in their luxury division was very exciting for me as this was one of the main reasons I chose to do my exchange at Bocconi University in Milan. The semester was an enriching experience and the business project far exceeded my expectations.

Overall our project was a great success and I would not have changed our approach. One aspect, however, that I would do differently would be the communication approach we had with the product manager at YSL. After our BP briefing at L’Oreal, he made it a point to give us his cell phone number in case we had questions but we did not use this to our advantage. In fact, we tried to be professional and send all of our questions in one email. This hindered our progress during some points of our BP as we were waiting on his answers. Looking back it would have made both our lives and his easier should we have just called.

To conclude, working with L’Oreal was a great pleasure and it gave me excellent exposure to the world of luxury and to the life of a brand manager. I established great contacts within the company and I am generally very pleased with the experience.

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## EXHIBIT 1: KEY PLAYERS

Company	Status	Sales	Total Group Sales
1. Estée Lauder	Autonomous firm (stock market)	4,967	4,967
2. L'Oréal	A division of l'Oréal (stock market)	3,773	15,790
3. LVMH Perfumes and Cosmetic	A division of LVMH (stock market)	2,519	15,306
4. Procter & Gamble Prestige Products	A division of P&G (stock market)	1,300 (E)	54,000 (E)
5. Chanel	A division of Chanel (Private)	1,300 (E)	3,600 (E)
6. Coty Prestige	A part of Coty Beauty and Prestige (Private)	1,280	2,320
7. Clarins	Autonomous firm (stock market)	967	967
8. YSL Beauté	Part of PPR (stock market)	626	3,568
9. Shiseido Europe	The European division of Shiseido (stock market)	582	4,150
10. Sisley	Autonomous private firm	450 (E)	450 (E)
(E) indicates estimates.			

## EXHIBIT 2: MAIN ITALIAN RETAILERS

RETAILER	MARKET SHARE
Limoni	21%
Douglas	6%
La Gardenia	6%
Sephora	6%
Marionnaud	2%
Ethos	2%
DMO	2%
Gargiulo & Maiello	2%
Coin	1%
Beauty Point	1%
Rinascente	1%
Olimpia Beauté	1%

### EXHIBIT 3: CURRENT SITUATION OF YSLIN ITALY

Makeup Market

BRAND	RANK
CHRISTIAN DIOR	1
CHANEL	2
LANCOME	3
COLLISTAR	4
CLINIQUE	5
YVES SAINT LAURENT	6
PUPA	7
SHISEIDO	8
ESTEE LAUDER	9
CLARINS PARIS	10
GUERLAIN	11
SISLEY	12
HELENA RUBINSTEIN	13
GIORGIO ARMANI	14
DOLCE & GABBANA	15

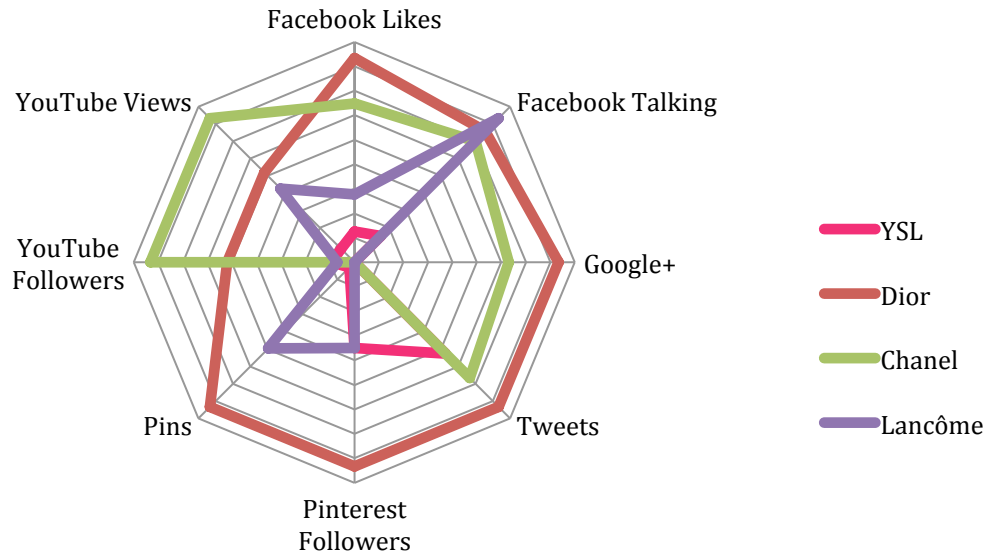
Mascara Market

BRAND	RANK
LANCOME	1
CHRISTIAN DIOR	2
CHANEL	3
YVES SAINT LAURENT	4
COLLISTAR	5
CLINIQUE	6
HELENA RUBINSTEIN	7
PUPA	8
ESTEE LAUDER	9
GUERLAIN	10
CLARINS PARIS	11
ELIZABETH ARDEN	12
SISLEY	13
GIORGIO ARMANI	14
SHISEIDO	15

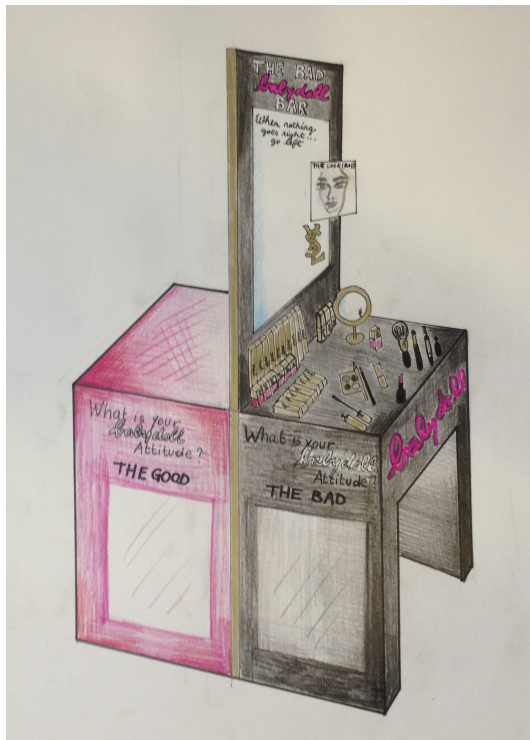
### EXHIBIT 4: NEW FACE OF BABY DOLL AND NEW PRINT AD



## EXHIBIT 5: COMPETITOR ANALYSIS TAKEAWAYS



## EXHIBIT 6: THE BABY DOLL BAR



**EXHIBIT 7: BEAUTY PRODUCT CONSUMPTION PER REGION IN ITALY<sup>14</sup>**

<b>CONSUMI ASSOLUTI PER REGIONE: DISTRIBUZIONE %</b>		
	<b>Prodotti per la cura personale</b>	<b>Saloni acconciatura, istituti di bellezza</b>
ABRUZZO	2,5	2,7
BASILICATA	0,8	0,9
CALABRIA	2,6	2,8
CAMPANIA	7,1	7,8
EMILIA ROMAGNA	8,3	8,5
FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA	2,2	2,3
LAZIO	9,0	9,2
LIGURIA	3,1	2,7
LOMBARDIA	21,1	18,5
MARCHE	2,3	2,3
MOLISE	0,6	0,6
PIEMONTE	8,6	7,5
PUGLIA	5,6	6,2
SARDEGNA	2,2	2,6
SICILIA	5,8	6,9
TOSCANA	5,9	6,0
TRENTINO-ALTO ADIGE	1,7	1,7
UMBRIA	1,4	1,5
VALLE D'AOSTA	0,3	0,2
VENETO	8,8	9,0
<b>TOTALE</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>

*Elaborazioni Centro Studi e Cultura d'Impresa su dati Istat*

<sup>14</sup> For the year 2011.